

# Chapter 2

## Comprehensive Plan

### Context

---

#### Overview of the Challenges

The following list of issues is intended to provide a context for the Comprehensive Plan, and as such represents a summary of the challenges that the community faces in planning for its future.

#### Potential Return of a High Rate of Residential Growth

The 2010 U.S. Census will likely show the population of the City of Evans as having nearly doubled from the 2000 Census figure of 9,514. From 2000 through 2009, the City issued building permits for 3,465 housing units, for a population increase possibly exceeding 10,000 people. The average number of housing units for the period is approximately 385 per year, with the highest being 693 units in 2002. That growth came to a halt with the economic crisis that began with the housing sector in 2007. In 2008 and 2009, a total of 31 housing units were built. There is potential to return to a high rate of residential growth, both in existing subdivisions and on unplatted lands in and around the City, as the nation and the world comes out of the recession.



Due to the structure of taxation in Colorado, much of the funding for services provided to residents comes from commercial development and associated sales tax revenues, which did not see the same amount of expansion as the residential side in Evans. In order to continue to provide the same level of City services, such as road maintenance, park development and maintenance, water and sewer service, and police and fire service, growth will need to be coordinated to include non-residential uses and commercial and industrial development will need to be promoted to prevent existing facilities and infrastructure from being overloaded.

#### Maintaining Adequate Public Infrastructure and Services

The City of Evans provides most of the public services in Evans, including streets, water, wastewater, fire, police and parks, and recreation. Weld County School District 6 provides public schools and the closest libraries are currently located in the City of Greeley. The City's ability to provide water and wastewater



**Quality of Life:** The attributes and amenities that contribute to the perception that a community is a "good place to live."



**Primary Employment:** Economic activity that results in money being injected into the local market or region, as opposed to money being circulated within a region by the provision of products or services to meet local demand. Typically, primary employment refers to the manufacture of products that are exported out of the region.

services and other services does not appear to be an immediate constraint to new development. However, as new development occurs, the City will need to ensure adequate funding to provide the same level and quality of services and public facilities, especially roads and parks. In addition, identifying funding mechanisms and appropriate growth policies related to the timing of needed infrastructure are important aspects to be considered in the Plan.

## Coordinated Transportation and Land Use Planning

The City adopted a Transportation Plan in 2004. Continuing to develop a functional transportation system as growth occurs will be important to quality of life in Evans. The Transportation Plan's emphasis on multi-modal travel options will ensure quality of life for more residents and provide a more sustainable transportation system. Furthermore, ensuring that the City is fiscally able to keep up with demand for transportation improvements and maintenance will be vital in maintaining quality of life.

## Parks and Open Space Needs

The City adopted a Parks, Trails and Recreation Master Plan in October, 2000, and a more specific Open Space and Trails Master Plan in 2004. Implementation of these plans is critically important to maintaining the quality of life for residents of the Evans.

During the process of adopting the 2002 Comprehensive Plan, residents expressed desire for more open space areas and activities for children and teens. In addition, the South Platte River was identified as an important conservation area. The previous City of Evans Comprehensive Plan identified the South Platte River floodplain as an important natural open space as well, and established goals to preserve environmentally sensitive natural resource areas and areas of historical significance in the community. The 2002 Comprehensive Plan also identified goals of preserving private open space in the form of farmland as community separators, which can be accomplished with conservation easements. However, without funding for acquiring open space and conservation easements, pressure to turn farmland into subdivisions will again begin to build as the economy improves.

## Need for Economic Development Opportunities

As alluded to earlier, municipalities in Colorado are heavily dependent on, and compete for, non-residential development for funding of city services due to the differences in property tax assessments and reliance on sales tax revenue. The City should continue to work to increase local employment opportunities as well as local services and commercial development for the

community. However, attracting retail development to the community is a challenge because of the strong competition for commercial market share along US 34, which is in Greeley. Currently, residents leave the City for almost all of their services, including most grocery shopping, health care, and employment.

The development of Sam's Club on 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue along with other commercial developments and additional industrial development over the last several years is promising, though many properties platted and zoned for commercial development have remained vacant after many years. The City will need to continue to be competitive and strive to get those lands developed while maintaining the goal of high-quality development. Future annexations will need to include non-residential development whenever feasible. Many of the amenities that provide quality of life to residents (a safe and efficient network of roads, for example) also benefit the City's efforts at economic development. Improving the image of the City will also further these efforts. The Future Land Use Plan should also take into consideration primary employment, which depends on large tracts of industrially zoned property to develop.

**Annexation:** The incorporation of land into the jurisdiction of a municipality, resulting in a change to the boundaries (city limits) of that municipality.



## Need for Regional Coordination

While competition is inherent, coordination among municipalities and with the County is vital to planning for development and sustaining and improving quality of life in the area. The City of Evans can work toward being a leader in the region by fostering communication and cooperation with its neighbors. Evans and Greeley have had common city boundaries for decades, but because the boundary meanders in places, it is often difficult to tell in which city a particular property is located. The City of Evans should try to avoid similar situations with Milliken, LaSalle, and Kersey.



The existence of several large unincorporated enclaves and potential for development within the County in the City's Urban Growth Area also make coordination with the County important.

Issues such as transportation, law enforcement, open space, and affordable housing cross jurisdictional lines and require cooperation to maximize effectiveness as well.

## Residential Housing Mix

Housing in Evans is generally affordable compared to surrounding communities. However, the housing stock tends to be fairly uniform and does not offer many options for residents who might seek a mix of styles, price ranges, types of neighborhoods, and an



**Design Standards:**

Regulations adopted in the Code that set forth criteria for the physical development of a site, including requirements pertaining to heights, landscaping, parking, setbacks and other physical requirements.

opportunity to “move up” within the community. Most of the housing is in single-family neighborhoods, with an overall average density that is fairly consistent among all residential development.

The City has four mobile home parks developed prior to most, if any, zoning regulations, as well as Cave Creek manufactured home land-lease community, which is zoned Planned Unit Development for 449 homes and began development in 1998. There are a number condominium developments including Fox Crossing in Ashcroft Heights which has 190 units, a few large apartment complexes including Crescent Cove and the Grove, which is geared toward students of the University of Northern Colorado. There are a number of older, individually owned multifamily buildings in the area of State Farm Road, Denver Street, Lakeside Drive, and in Old Town. The only large-lot, single-family development in the City is Neville's Crossing. There are a number of housing developments within the City's Urban Growth Boundary that were developed and remain in unincorporated Weld County, including Carriage Estates, Hill 'n' Park, Arrowhead, and others.

## Appearance of Development

Since the adoption of the 2002 Comprehensive Plan, the City has adopted design standards for both residential and non-residential development, revised the landscaping and signage regulations, and made improvements to code enforcement operations. The City has recently established an Urban Renewal Authority and is considering other tools to encourage investment in improvements to or replacement of existing buildings.

## Special Planning Focus Areas

The Evans City Council has identified the following areas to focus on for studying how to provide the most effective investment of public improvements:

1. The US 85 Corridor
2. The 11<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor
3. The 23<sup>rd</sup> Avenue Corridor
4. The 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor
5. The future 35<sup>th</sup> Avenue Corridor south of the South Platte River
6. Old Town Evans
7. South Platte/Big Thompson River Corridor

Note: These focus areas are *not* listed in order of importance. See “Planning Focus Areas” on page 3-17 for a description and Map 2 for a depiction of these areas.